

**Houston County Commissioners Meeting
November 21, 2023
Warner Robins, Georgia**

The Houston County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, November 21, 2023, at the Houston County Annex in Warner Robins, GA, with Chairman Perdue presiding and Commissioners Byrd, Gottwals, Robinson, and Talton present. Also present were County Attorney Tom Hall, Director of Administration Robbie Dunbar, Director of Operations Brian Jones, Director of Personnel Ken Carter, Utility Director Terry Dietsch, Director of Purchasing Vanessa Zimmerman, Fire/HEMA Chief Chris Stoner, Chief Financial Officer Danyelle George, Senior Accountant Will Davis, District Attorney William Kendall, Chief Building Inspector Tim Andrews, and Community Planner Jake Cox.

Commissioner Robinson led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Pastor Tommy Odum, from The Well at Centerville, gave the Invocation. He then expressed his thanks to the Board for the work they do, not only in leading the County but the way they serve the people in the County. Pastor Odum spoke of a message series at his church about being thankful. He described the Food Pantry at The Well at Centerville, and how it provides between 15,000 to 20,000 pounds of food monthly to those in need and how they serve over 300 individuals through the church's clothes closet each month. He closed his remarks by wishing all the Commissioners and Chairman a Happy Thanksgiving.

Chairman Perdue expressed his appreciation to Pastor Tommy Odum and those who attend The Well at Centerville for the positive impact made by the church through its food pantry and clothes closet.

Chairman Perdue presented and read a Mental Health Resolution. This resolution was suggested by the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia and ACCG's President Commissioner Henry Craig of Baldwin County. The Resolution expresses Houston County's support and encouragement to the Governor and members of the General Assembly who are working on mental health solutions at the state level.

Mr. Byrd stated that he was glad our Board was part of this action and hoped that elected officials on the state level would take action to improve mental health resources.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the minutes from the November 7, 2023 meeting.

Ms. Robinson presented an acknowledgement of an intergovernmental agreement for blood draws.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve the intergovernmental agreement between Houston County Sheriff's Office, The City of Perry, with Acknowledging Consent by Houston County Board of Commissioners and CorrectHealth Houston, LLC. This agreement will facilitate the Perry Police Department's ability to utilize the services provided by CorrectHealth Houston, LLC at the Houston County Detention Center to obtain blood draws on suspected driving under the influence detainees that are brought to the Detention Center by the City of Perry Police Department. This agreement shall run concurrently with the agreement signed by Sheriff Talton on February 13, 2023.

Ms. Robinson presented the final change order for the State Court Expansion.

Motion by Ms. Robinson, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve change order #8, the final adjusting change order on the State Court Expansion for a decrease in the contract price of \$91,529.74. This decrease will reduce the contract amount from \$20,596,537.35 to \$20,505,007.61.

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Mr. Gottwals presented a request for the addition of a new position in the District Attorney's Office.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the addition of an Assistant District Attorney to the Houston County Position Control Listing. This position will be listed as a Grade 30 and is typically hired at a Step "A". This addition is to become effective November 22, 2023.

Also, to approve the Accounting Department to make any necessary budgetary adjustments.

Chairman Perdue thanked District Attorney Kendall for coming to the meeting and for the great work he and his staff are doing.

Mr. Gottwals presented a request to restructure the Records and Inventory Manager Position.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the restructuring of the Records and Inventory Manager Position in Purchasing to become effective November 22, 2023 as follows:

Eliminate

- Inventory Warehouse Clerk (Pos #0061) – Grade 13

Change

- Records Retention Manager (Pos #0062) – Grade 13 to Inventory and Records Manager (Same Pos No.) – Grade 16

This change will not affect the Detention Officer/Inmate Detail position.

Also, to approve the Accounting Department to make any necessary budgetary adjustments.

Mr. Perdue stated that the Purchasing staff member handling records is doing a great job and this move would put that staff member over handling inventory in the warehouse as well. He thanked Vanessa Zimmerman, Purchasing Director, for attending the meeting and for the great job she is doing.

Motion by Mr. Gottwals, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all to approve the following to the Adjustments and Appeals Board:

Mr. Mark Buzzell for a term of 11/17/2023 thru 07/01/2025

Mr. Dave Cyr for a term of 11/17/2023 thru 10/30/2026

Mr. Luther Solomon for a term of 11/17/2023 thru 10/30/2026

Mr. Dylan Wingate for a term of 11/17/2023 thru 10/30/2026

Mr. Byrd expressed his appreciation to the individuals who have been appointed to the various boards by the Commissioners.

Mr. Talton presented a request to approve a new postage meter in the Commissioner's Office.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the Lease Agreement with Pitney Bowes, of Stanford, CT, to replace the current postage meter that is being phased out. The terms of the new lease will be 60 months at a cost of \$265.62 quarterly or an annual fee of \$1,062.48. This is a decrease in cost from our current lease and will be an annual savings of \$259.20. This lease will be paid from the Commissioner's Office Equipment budget line item.

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Mr. Talton expressed his appreciation for County staff working to save money wherever possible.

Mr. Talton presented a request to write off expired inventory in the Purchasing Warehouse.

Motion by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Byrd and carried unanimously by all to approve the write off of expired filters that have accumulated in the Purchasing Warehouse. These filters are for equipment we no longer own and have a 5-year shelf life. These expired filters represent an expense of \$19,402.81.

In addition to the filters to write off expired first aid refills representing an expense of \$660.70.

Chairman Perdue stated that an audit of items at the County's warehouse uncovered filters that had either expired or were for vehicles the County no longer had in its inventory that needed to be disposed of. He also stated that moving forward, there would be better control of inventory and a move to just-in-time purchasing of necessary items where possible.

Mr. Talton said that this discovery of inventory of unusable filters has been the result of a 20-year span of time and not the result of recent purchases.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for approval of a bid for work at the Public Works Office.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Talton, and carried unanimously by all to approve the award of a bid to replace two windows and repair damage due to termites at the Public Works Office, to Plumb Line Construction LLC of Warner Robins, GA. This bid in the amount of \$22,300 will be paid from the 2018 SPLOST.

Chairman Perdue explained this damage was limited to a few boards that were not pressure treated.

Mr. Byrd presented a request for approval of a License Agreement with the Georgia Agricultural Exposition Authority.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Mr. Gottwals, and carried unanimously by all to approve entering into an agreement with Georgia Agricultural Exposition Authority for the use of the Georgia Grown Building at the Georgia National Fairgrounds on December 12, 2023 for the Houston County Christmas Party in the amount of \$525. This will be funded by Host Fees.

Chairman Perdue advised this approval was for the signing of the contract and that the County would incur additional fees for additional services at the Fairgrounds.

Motion by Mr. Byrd, second by Ms. Robinson, and carried unanimously by all to approve the payment of the bills totaling \$2,523,244.85.

Chairman Perdue closed the regular portion of the meeting and opened Public Comments.

John Schwendler spoke of two dangerous traffic areas and requested the Board's help with both. The first was the intersection at SR 247 south, SR 127 intersection and railroad crossing. He stated that when a train is blocking this road the traffic backs up on SR 247 south causing a traffic hazard in that area. He requested the County pave a collector lane for vehicles turning right so they are not on SR 247 south. He also spoke about the intersection of Old Hawkinsville Road and SR 129, saying traffic turning at this intersection has limited sight distance. He requested a flashing sign warning of cross turning traffic be installed or some other warning system to alert oncoming traffic.

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Chairman Perdue stated that he is aware of both intersections and that the decision to make any improvements would need to come from the GA Department of Transportation. He said that Community Planner, Jake Cox, would provide him with contact information to members of the Houston County legislative delegation so that he could request action to be taken at both intersections.

Adam Watson had questions about the County's personnel policies regarding an ongoing issue and spoke about an electrical meter on his property that he is seeking clarification on.

District Attorney Will Kendall expressed his thanks to the Board for the approval of an additional Assistant DA for his department and stated that the additional cases his department is handling necessitates this additional staff member.

Meg Meheserle passed out information to the Board about an upcoming voting event in Perry, spoke highly of the District Attorney and Sheriff's Department personnel and made comments regarding election integrity.

With no further comments, Chairman Perdue closed the Public Comments portion of the meeting and opened the floor for Commissioner Comments.

Mr. Byrd thanked Pastor Odum for his attendance and the work that The Well at Centerville does for the Houston County community and is glad that his mom attends such a wonderful church. He expressed that he has so much to be thankful for and wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Mr. Talton thanked the County staff and employees for the excellent way in which they do their jobs and thanked the District Attorney for his work in keeping the citizens of Houston County safe. He concluded his remarks by wishing everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Ms. Robinson wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving and hoped they would be safe while traveling.

Mr. Gottwals wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Chairman Perdue thanked everyone for attending the meeting and expressed his appreciation to the Board members, the County employees and the citizens of Houston County and that he is very thankful for his family, friends and church. He concluded his remarks by saying that the Tommy Stalnaker Aquatic center would be holding a ribbon cutting soon and that high school swim teams are already using the facility as a soft opening. He wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Talton, second by Mr. Byrd, and carried unanimously by all. Meeting adjourned.

Robbie Dunbar
Director of Administration

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner